

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN008		
Name of Service:	Ballyjamesduff Community Creche		
Address of Service:	Virginia Road, Ballyjamesduff, Co. Cavan		
Eircode:	A82 R282		
Name of Registered Provider:	Kevin Foley		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	24/03/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	65	PM 39
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath		
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Cunningham & D Murray		
Title:	Early Years Inspectors		
Authority to Inspect			
The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).			
Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable		

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Description of service

Ballyjamesduff Community Creche is a community based childcare service for pre-school children aged 0 to 6 years and is managed by a Voluntary Board of Management. The service provides full day childcare, part time and sessional care and education to children from 08.00am – 18.00hours Monday to Friday. The setting has capacity to accommodate 70 preschool children. School aged care is provided also. The service is located in a purpose-built single-story building which has four care rooms. A fifth care room is located in a single prefabricated building adjacent to the main building. There are spacious outdoor play areas at the side and rear of the premises for use by pre-school children and school age children.

Staffing

The registered provider is not involved in the day to day running of the service and was not present for the inspection. The designated person in charge was present and facilitated the inspection. The service employs twenty-five adults which includes the manager, assistant manager, 1 office coordinator, 18 childcare practitioner, 3 staff employed in the kitchen (one of whom is employed under the community employment scheme), and 1 staff member who works with school aged children only. Three students are also on placement in the service, one of whom was present on the day of inspection.

On the day of inspection, the manager and 20 staff members were present, 15 staff members providing direct care to children, 1 staff member providing care to school aged children only, 2 kitchen staff, and one student.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation

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- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) Twenty-five staff files were reviewed and three student files.

(a)&(b) Fifty validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source for the staff members. Two validated references were also available for each of the students in the service.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff members and the students in the service. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

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(d) Police vetting was available for seven staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All staff members providing direct care to children had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) Police vetting was not available for one staff member and one student in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) The staff member has commenced the process of obtaining police vetting. This staff member does not work directly with the children.

The student is no longer in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

The manager of the service submitted evidence of the staff member in the process of obtaining police vetting.

This staff member does not work directly with the children.

Summary Comment

This regulation remains outstanding as the Inspectorate has not received the police vetting for the staff member.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

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(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) During the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct and observed as follows:

- **Caterpillar Room:** Three staff members cared for 7 pre-school children (aged between 15 months and 20 months). Six children were attending for full day care and one child was attending part-time care. A student was also present.
- **Butterfly Room:** Three staff members cared for 11 pre-school children (aged between 1 year 6 months and 2 years 6 months), 8 children were attending for full day care and 3 children were attending part-time care.
- **Ladybird Room:** Three staff members cared for 17 preschool children (aged between 3 years and 4 years and 6 months). Ten children were attending for full day care, five children were attending part-time care and 2 children were attending sessional care.
- **Busy Bee Room:** Three staff members cared for 18 pre-school children (aged between 4 years and 5 years). Nine children were attending for full day care, 8 children were attending for part-time care and 1 child was attending sessional care.
- **Little Ducklings Room:** Three staff members cared for 12 pre-school children (aged between 2 years and 3 years). Six children were attending for full day care and 6 children were attending for part-time care.

(8) Two staff members were present, at all times in the service as required by Regulation 11 (8), confirmed by the staff roster and staff attendance records.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

Compliance Information

Basic Needs of the Infants and Children:

- The snacks and meals on the day of inspection were served at appropriate times and children were able to access their drinks throughout the day; the children's reusable water bottles were stored on low-level shelves. Assistance was given to the children that required help with feeding and opening packaging and children were observed to be self-sufficient where possible.
- Nappy changing was carried out at designated daily intervals and as the need arose. Older children were encouraged to use sanitary facilities independently, with supervision and verbal reminders regarding hand washing provided as needed.
- Within the care rooms, adequate space was available to accommodate a range of activities, such as messy play, use of wheeled toys, tabletop play, construction activities and imaginary play.
- A relaxed and calm environment was provided for the children, and the adults were observed to speak kindly and encouraging to the children.
- During discussion with staff and observation on the day of inspection, it was noted that in addition to facilitating routine nap times, staff also accommodated children to sleep according to their requirements, for example when a child displayed signs of tiredness.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

- Each staff member was assigned to a care room. The children knew and were accustomed to the staff and staff were observed to spend time comforting the children as needed in the caterpillar and Butterfly rooms.
- Family trees were displayed in the care rooms which supported the children's sense of identity and belonging.
- Transitions were managed well with staff informing children when they were moving from one activity to the next, such as when moving from free play to snack time.

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- There was a daily routine in place in each learning room which provided the children with opportunities for child-initiated play, adult-directed activities, circle time and outdoor play.
- The children participated in Easter art activities in the care rooms and free play included access to sensory play materials for example in the caterpillar room, the tuff tray was filled with suitable materials.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

Compliance Information

(1)(b) There are two cot rooms available in the service, one in the Caterpillar room with 4 standard cots and one in the Butterfly room with two cots standard cots for children requiring sleep. Within the care rooms there were mats and cushions for children to take a break from activities and rest, if needed. Stackable beds were available for the children over 2 years requiring sleep.

(3)(a) There were 8 outdoor spaces in total which were divided by fencing, enclosed and had a combination of artificial grass/grass and cement. Partially sheltered areas permitted outdoor play in all types of weather.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Materials and equipment were available on low level shelving in the care rooms. This assisted children to select and replace items of interest independently. The rooms were bright and airy with artwork displayed. Home corners, construction areas, arts and craft were available. Some of the equipment in the outdoor spaces included

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sand/water tables, playhouses and kitchens, musical/pouring walls, ride on toys, digging pits, mud kitchens, tyres, goal posts, balls and benches.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service had a weekly menu plan with a variety of food ranging from meat and poultry all prepared onsite by the cooks. On the day of inspection between 09:30 to 10am the children had a snack of fruit and yogurts for the younger children. While the older children took in a snack from home. Dinner was served at 11.30am to 12.30pm which consisted of chilli beef and rice, the younger age groups meal was less spicy. Afternoon snack was served at approximately 3.00pm which consisted of fruit and homemade lemon drizzle traybake. Water was the drink of choice.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The front door of the service was secured, a staff member answers the door to facilitate visitors to gain access. This minimised the risk of unauthorised persons gaining access to the service.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelving or secured cupboards, out of the reach of children.
- Toys and play equipment were safe for the age group using them, in good condition, and free from pinch and crush points, exposed bolts or sharp edges.

Safe Sleep:

Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- Temperature of the cot room was maintained between 16 to 20°C and between 18 to 22°C in the care rooms used for sleep.

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- A sleep log was available to record the position, colour and breathing pattern on all sleeping children at 10 minutes intervals.
- Children sleeping on sleep mats were supervised at all times.

Fire Safety:

The following Fire Safety practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- All emergency exit doors were accessible in the event of an evacuation.
- Fire drills were recorded on a monthly basis.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

Compliance Information

(1) Records demonstrated that the date and time of attendance and departure in respect of each pre-school child were recorded on a daily basis.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) The service provided evidence that persons had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-*
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and*
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

Compliance Information

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- (1)(a) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 20/03/2026.
- (b) A record was maintained of the mains powered smoke alarms and firefighting equipment on the premises. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 18/09/2025. The firefighting equipment was last serviced in 8/12/2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 90 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2025 to 27/03/2026.